Geoffrey Crayon (narrator) & Diedrich Knickerbocker (wrote the story)

Why does the author use a Frame Narrative?

Archetypes:

Imagination versus reality

Blue & green

New Romantic Hero

Nicholaus Vedder (symbolic)

Allegory, satire, frame tale, hyperbole, inflated diction

Rip vs. Franklin

Rip’s wife

Satire: frame device, description of Rip, Rip and his wife, Rip’s son “junto”, Rips behavior on the mountain, Rip’s awakening to the changes in the tone, folklorists, the townspeople, the politician

Folk culture, folk legend, folk lore

Themes: transforming imagination in American Romanticism, escape from modern life,

1. How does Rip’s “meekness of spirit” gain him popularity
2. Discuss the significance: “This, however, always provoked a fresh **volley** from his wife; so he was fain (obliged) to draw off his **forces**…” Explain the motif
3. Discuss the significance of the “rubicund” portrait of George III. What is the connotative meaning of “rubicund”
4. Discuss the words: “perpetual” “sleepy” “lazy” “listlessly”. How do they help create meaning in the story?
5. Discuss the use of descriptive words and figurative language in the following passage: “He saw at a distance the *Lordly* Hudson, far, far below him, moving on its *silent* but *majestic* course, with the reflection of the *purple* cloud, or the sail of a *lagging* bark, here and there *sleeping* on its *glassy* bosom, and at last losing itself in the *blue* highlands.”
6. Describe the encounter with the little man and the game of nine pins. Why do you think Irving spends so much time describing them? Why does Rip feel that they are the most “melancholy party of pleasure he had ever witnessed”?
7. Discuss the significance of the “amphitheater” before Rip falls asleep. Compare it to the description after he wakens. What is the significance?
8. Discuss the meaning of the changes at the village inn. In what ways does the behavior of the patrons change? What inspired the changes? What does this convey about human nature?
9. How is the story an allegory? Refer to characters as symbolic and details that reveal the allegory.
10. At the beginning of the story, Rip Van Winkle represents the complacent American at the time of the Revolution because he acquiesces to his wife. What does she represent? Relate elements of the story to American society, history and spirit surrounding the Revolutionary War. How do the changes in Rip after his lengthy slumber relate to the change in America after the war?

Common attitudes and tendencies of American Romantic Literature include:

1. A distrust of civilization
2. Nostalgia for the past
3. Concern for individual freedom
4. Love for the beauty of the natural landscape
5. Interest in the supernatural

Find examples/lines in the story to support each attitude or tendency.

Romantic heroes generally are:

1. Childlike
2. Innocent
3. Distrustful of women
4. Fond of nature
5. In search of a higher truth

Find lines from the story to describe each character trait.